

# THE LITERARY CHRONICLE

## And Weekly Review;

Forming an Analysis and General Repository of Literature, Philosophy, Science, Arts, History, the Drama, Morals, Manners, and Amusements.

This Paper is published at Six o'Clock every Saturday Morning; and forwarded Weekly, or in Monthly Parts, to all Parts of the United Kingdom.

No. 40. LONDON, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1820. Price 6d.

### Review of New Books.

*Lessons of Thrift.* Published for general benefit. By a Member of the Save-all Club. 8vo. pp. 240. London, 1820.

IN an age of reputed dissipation and extravagance, when, from the minister to the mechanic, economy is spurned, and the good old English word *thrift* is only to be found in the dictionary, it requires more than ordinary courage for a writer to come forward, and advocate doctrines almost considered as obsolete. It is very true, we sometimes encounter a copy of the good advice, written by Dr. Franklin, and given under the title of 'Poor Richard's sayings;' yet it is generally considered as little adapted to the present times as the almanack in which it first appeared; and its economical precepts quoted as the quaint conceits of an eccentric writer. But we who were taught lessons of economy in our childhood, and who actually had one of those exploded but useful articles, a *thrift box*, into which we carefully transferred the little presents we received, felt peculiar pleasure when we heard of the existence of the 'Save-all Club,' and that one of its members was about to give the world the result of their labours in 'Lessons of Thrift.'

Without detaining our readers longer by an account of our own economical habits or feelings, we shall proceed to give an account of the volume before us, which we have read with peculiar pleasure; indeed, it is one of those light humorous productions, which, with a considerable portion of satire, and interlarded with anecdotes, must suit all palates, and be universally read.

The work consists of forty-four lessons, commencing with that useful article of domestic economy, the 'save-all;' and which, we are told, has been adopted as the sacred emblem of the club. The author then proceeds to a variety of subjects, illustrative of the principles of thrift. Under the head of 'Contentment,' we meet with the following judicious observations, which will show, that the 'Lessons of Thrift,' though decidedly a work of humour, have a good moral tendency:—

'A great secret of content is to compare ourselves with others yet more unhappy. Three quarters, perhaps, of the human race live from day to day, and are not secure of the pittance of to-morrow. We want a work on the distribution of human life, on the unaccountably daily nourishment of so many millions of mouths, and the unceasing supply of so many comforts. This daily miracle, the more it is considered, becomes the more wonderful; but God forbid that a famine should teach its importance. The constant re-production of animal and vegetable food, arranged and maintained by human industry—the prodigality of nature, the excess of her productions, which leads to commerce and interchange between nations, displays the infinite wealth, and power, and be-

nificence of an infinite Creator, whose powers are in constant activity, and whose creation is repeated every year and every day. To suppose such wonderful arrangements the effect of chance, is not to display intellect, but to struggle against both intellect and sensation.

'Another cogent argument against discontent and vain wishes arises from the simple reflections of experience, that the imaginary good of our desires often turns out to be a real evil, while the supposed evil, which we dread and wish to shun, proves to be the very path to an unexpected good, a real benefit. Life is so full of such examples, as to set human prudence at defiance. There is a destiny, or, in other words, a superior direction in human affairs, which often baffles skill, and even belief. Great affairs have often depended upon what we call accidental trifles; the sudden meeting of a friend, whom, perhaps, we have not seen for years; the receipt of an unintentional letter; the stepping into a strange house; a paragraph in a newspaper; and a thousand like instances. The devout among the Catholics ascribe such events to guardian angels, and have even rituals of prayers addressed to those beneficent spirits, whom they suppose to take the same care of us as we do of monkeys and parrots, and other tame animals. The idea is more pleasing than scriptural or rational; but there is so little religion left in the world, that after seeing the horrors of atheism in a neighbouring country, one is glad to meet with that principle, the chief bond of society, in any shape or disguise, even if she wear, not the cap and bells of superstition, but a few sober ornaments from the wardrobe of her fantastic rival. In all events, a humble trust in the omniscience and infinite benignity of Providence, must ever be the mainspring of contentment in the various parts we perform on this theatre of life, in which to act our part well is our chief object, whether as servants or as heroes.'

The eighth lesson, on 'Cheap Travelling,' we insert entire:—

'The dearness of travelling has become an object of universal complaint. All the charges have been doubled within a few years, if perhaps we except sandwiches. But, as the Save-all would rather spend contrivance than money, one of our members lighted upon a curious expedient. He was at the distance of four hundred miles from the capital, and anxious to return, when luckily a hearse arrived, with the mortal remains of a nobleman, brought down to be interred in the family vault. Bargaining with the coachman, he secured his journey at a very moderate price; and if his posture was uneasy, his pockets rejoiced. It is almost needless to add that he had room enough for some cold mutton, bread and beer, so as not to be himself devoured at the inns; his great coat serving as a bed.

'Upon a different occasion, a hearse served to convey a facetious companion, while the coachman might have called, "Alive! alive! all alive, ho!" Dr. Mounsey, of Chelsea College, was not upon the best terms with his wife; and to pass the time, they often amused themselves in quarrelling;—not amiss in cold weather, as it is found to save coals. One Sunday, the doctor walked to Fulham, where he was engaged to dinner; but in the evening behold a thunder-storm, with a continued torrent of rain. No sort of carriage was to be had but a return-hearse, which he engaged to go by Chelsea.

The storm having at length abated, the lady was at the window when the hearse drove up to the door, "What do you mean?" she said to the coachman. "I have brought the doctor, madam."—"Thank God!" was the reply; "now he is as he should be." The doctor, shoving out, and finding himself upon his legs, shook his cane at his kind half, with this retort, "You jade, I shall live long to plague you, I hope."

In an account of the famine which the siege of Sancerre occasioned, we have the following affecting anecdote related by Lery:—

"Among the piteous scenes which this writer describes, is the death of a little boy of ten years, whom he knew. Seeing his father and mother in tears, and rubbing his limbs, which had become as dry as wood, he said, "Why do you weep to see me die of hunger? Ye are my good father and mother, but I know ye have nothing to give me! I do not ask for bread; for you have none: but it is God's will that I thus die, and his will cannot be opposed. That holy man Lazarus, did not he suffer hunger? Do not think that I have read my Bible for nothing." And in thus consoling his afflicted parents the little innocent expired."

The thirteenth lesson, 'To save Fire,' is an amusing one, which tempts us to insert the whole of it:—

"In countries where wood is used as fuel, a good housewife will make a hollow in the ashes under the chief log, where she pours a little water, which doubles the existence of the said log. It is easy also nearly to smother the fire with the ashes, so as to retain some heat without wasting your materials. But a more economical (some ladies pronounce *comical*) plan was devised by two foreign members. The one, a Frenchman, laid in half a cart-load of wood, price seventeen francs, ten sous; these deserving a large letter to attract an attention too often refused. As he had a fourth floor, and with it a little cellar, as usual at Paris, one day's exercise was to carry the wood from the cellar to his apartment, and the next to replace it in the cellar. By this ingenious stratagem he contrived to keep up his natural temperature, without any waste whatever. The other laudable example was that of an Italian, who only purchased two faggots, which he amused himself in throwing from his window into the court-yard, and then running down stairs to fetch them up; and this salutary exercise, often repeated, was found sufficient even in a hard frost. It is necessary to add that he put on old shoes, that he might not wear out a good pair.

"But coals! coals! what a terrible expence! My bill for one year was nineteen shillings and two pence three farthings. Yet I learned in France to use a *chancelier*, which is a wooden box, lined with the fur of a sheep, and which, reaching to the middle of the legs, keeps the feet warm; not to speak of the *chauffrette*, used by the poor, being a little box with hot charcoal, on which the feet are placed, there being holes to let the heat pass. Once calling on a literary man at Paris, I found him in his large library, with a blanket wrapped about his lower extremities. A good hint to assist meditation in those who love to meditate in bed, like Thomson the poet, whom a friend found in bed at noon. "You are not ill, I hope?"—"Not at all; but I had no motive to rise."

"By the by, that same bed may save coals. It is well known that when a cardinal called on Henrietta, the widow of Charles I. then at Paris, and asked her where her daughter was, the queen answered, that the poor girl was in bed, as they had no money to buy firing. This was when Mazarine was amassing all the revenues of France into his own coffers; and a little journey being proposed to the young king, not a royal carriage fit for use could be found, as is stated in the strange *Memoirs of La Porte*, his valet-de-chambre. Well might the sceptred boy exclaim, on seeing Mazarine's gorgeous train of attendants, "*Voilà le Grand Turc qui passe!*"

"A poker is a great waster of coals, especially in female hands, and no such destructive weapon is known in my room.

I am persuaded that the noted maxim of Pythagoras, so needlessly allegorised *Ignem cultro ne fodito*, "do not poke fire with a knife," is a mere caution against this practice.

"As to the "right of the poker," a subject of frequent matrimonial discussion and oratory, I do not pretend to decide, as my purpose is to promote concord and good humour. The learned reader may however consult the *Digest*, tit. 666 de *disc. fam. §§ de foco fod.* if he can find the passage, for that law does not seem to be well digested.

"The savages of Canada have, or at least had when first visited by the French, a method of cookery well calculated to save firing. They boiled all their victuals in a wooden pot. As riddles are at present a fashionable amusement, not only innocent but laudable, as tending to excite thought and sharpen the wit, I leave my readers to think, and reserve the explanation till the end of this chapter.

"If you have friendly neighbours, much expense in firing may be saved by having a pot in common, each neighbour putting his piece of meat and vegetables to be boiled one day at one house, another day at another. This plan may be called a kind of pot-luck, without a possibility of mistake, the luck of other pots being perilous. It is well known that a German baron, not much conversant in the English language, being invited by a noble lord to stay and take pot-luck, ate almost nothing of two services; and being asked the cause, answered, "Me wait for the favoured dish dat you call pot-luck."

"As to the boiling of an egg, or toasting a bit of cheese, a lamp will suffice, and lamp-oil is not costly. An Italian contrived to procure even olive-oil very cheap, by a stratagem which must not be imitated, as it may lead to an elegant apartment in Newgate-street. He contrived to fix a sponge at the bottom of his vase—goes to the shop—gets it filled—offers bad money—merchant refuses—has no other—obliged to refund the oil to the last drop—but enough remains in his sponge to answer his purpose. A punning member said it was a trick that deserved the spunging-house.

"The explanation of the riddle is, that the wooden pot was placed near a large fire, where stones were successively heated and thrown into the water, so as to maintain the ebullition."

The ingenuity of a French curate, in getting rid of some troublesome visitors, though not new, is worth extracting:—

"Not a century has passed in France without civil wars. During these, in the minority of Louis XIV. the military gangs pillaged, as usual, the poor peasants; nor did they spare, though in a more civil way, the farmers and the curates. A worthy curate was pestered, day after day, by officers who came to beg, or rather to command a dinner. Seeing a fresh band arrive, his patience was exhausted, till he bethought himself of an innocent stratagem. "Quick, quick," he called to his cook-maid, "kill a goose and a couple of fowls for these gentlemen." Then retiring to a cabinet, he re-entered, clothed in his surplice, and begged his guests to command his house, but to excuse his absence for half an hour. The officers requiring the occasion—"Be not alarmed, gentlemen; but the plague has unhappily appeared in my parish, and I am only going to give extreme unction to a person infected, whom I confessed this morning. Servant; in half an hour." But he could not gain his door so quick as the officers, who hastened to leave him and his pestiferous parish."

On the changes that have taken place in English manners as to the economy of time, our author is happily satirical, in his lesson on light; we quote a passage:—

"Light is among the dear commodities, being carefully taxed, whether by night or by day. We may well say with the poet—

"Dear as the light that visits these sad eyes."

Our club is very sparing in candles, and prefers, as in China,

the light of day, especially in a furnished lodging, where there is nothing to pay for that general benefit.

'An ingenious member has even contrived, in winter, to profit by the light of his neighbour—a most innocent theft, which does harm to none. There being only a thin wall, or rather partition, between his chamber and that of a tailor, often occupied to a late hour, he contrived a hole, by which he can see to read and to go to bed. This invention saves him three or four pounds a-year (generally about 3l. 7s. 2½d.) and is honourably mentioned in the records of the club.

'But the fashionable world is in the dream of Richard III.  
A light! a light! my kingdom for a light.

Their whole life is sold by inch of candle. It is inconceivable what pleasure there can be in reversing the occupations of day and night. A fashionable lady will dine at ten at night, and go to bed at four in the morning. Her great great grandmother dined at ten in the day, and was in bed by six. How different the health and complexion! But roses and lilies are now little known, except in distillation and washes; and pins are little worn, though they have been quaintly called the thorns of Christian roses. Pin-money remains, and a lady generally prefers the cash to the pins.

'Franklin has, in his usual style of dry and homely humour, ridiculed the modern European infatuation of giving bread to waxchandlers and candle-makers, at a great expense to our purse, health, and reputation. A careful study of that useful publication, the almanac, would enable us to supply ourselves, at no expense, with the blessed and beneficial light of day. The wheel of fashion is however turning so fast, that the good ancient customs may surmount. "Happy time for old England, neighbour," said a sulky politician to a friend of mine, "when parliament met at nine in the morning. The deliberations were wise and frugal, and had the air of a grave senate and important affairs. But who ever saw a lamp in the hands of Minerva? We all know the purposes that are pursued by night and candle-light. They have nothing to do with wisdom, neighbour. All the wise men are then asleep." He spoke emphatically, as he is always in bed by eight o'clock. As to his Minerva I know nothing, except what I read in my youth, that she was the goddess of wisdom, and had no mother, which seems well contrived, as wisdom has few relations on the female side.

'Jesting apart (for I owe my candle-maker a bill), if the court would as usual hold *levées* on the king's rising from bed, at seven or eight in the morning, the ancient frugality of artificial light might soon revive. Opinion is the queen of the world, and Fashion is her daughter, the princess royal. A little jog of the wheel would bring us where we were, and even the novelty would be delightful. At nine (morning) all the streets would overflow with coaches. At twelve all the knockers would announce the hour of solemn dinners. Plays by daylight, as in Shakspeare's time.'

Our author, in his lesson on Generosity, well observes, that 'the practice of thrift does not exclude that of true generosity; but, on the contrary, affords means for its exertion,' and he quotes two examples in proof of the assertion; the first is, that of a nobleman, who used to examine his bills very scrupulously, even to pence and farthings, and was often on that account ridiculed by an intimate friend. This friend afterwards falling into unmerited distress, was surprised with receiving 1000l. from the economical nobleman, with the following laconic epistle. 'The farthings you have so often laughed at, enable me to lend you the inclosed, which you will return at your own convenience.' The second anecdote is that of the old gentleman, scolding his servant for throwing away a match not lighted at both ends, but who gave two hundred guineas to a public charity. Under this head we have also, among many others, the following pleasing anecdotes of generosity:—

'A scarcity, nearly approaching to famine, prevailed in France in 1741, the effect of the terrible frost of 1740. The Duchess of Ventadour, who had from her exemplary character been appointed governess of the infant king Louis XV., not only gave all her revenue, but borrowed besides 80,000 francs, to relieve the poor. Her steward remonstrating that that she passed all the bounds of prudence, she mildly answered, "Let us give always, and even borrow, while it is necessary to save the poor from death. We shall never want, neither I nor my family. In my station there is no great merit in trusting to Providence."

'The dauphin, son of Louis XV., a prince of excellent qualities and dispositions, died in his thirty-sixth year, with great resignation and tranquillity. The Duke of Orleans waiting on the king with compliments of condolence, said, "Is it possible, then, to be so calm at the point of death?"—"Sometimes," answered the afflicted father, "when the life is without reproach."

'A young man on the point of marriage was drawn for the militia in Lorraine. In despair he applied to the Count de Mitry, captain of the regiment, who in compassion gave his word that the service should not exceed one year. The term expired, the captain explained to the colonel, and requested the man's discharge, which the colonel flatly refused, as he said the subject was an excellent soldier, and did credit to the corps. Next day he was surprised when the captain waited on him in the soldier's attire, knapsack and musquet, with this address: "My colonel, as the word of a gentleman is sacred, and I have pledged mine that this man shall only serve for a year, here is my commission of captain, which I resign, and am ready to serve in his place." The colonel with shame and amazement, signed the discharge.'

'These examples shall be closed with a more recent one, that fell within my own information. It is well known that at Paris water is not conducted by pipes to each house as in London, but is brought by a numerous class of men, often natives of Auvergne, stout sons of a mountainous country, in buckets, and deposited in an earthen vase as large as a hogs-head, where it filters through gravel at the bottom, and is drawn by a cock for the use of the family. These men are called *porteurs d'eau*, or water-bearers. A man of wealth, marked for the guillotine, was obliged to escape in great haste, having barely time to fill his pockets with money and valuable papers. He was even about to leave and lose a little strong box, containing two thousand louis d'or, when the water-bearer chanced to come. "Take this, my friend, and keep it for me," was all he had time to say, and he instantly fled, and, like many others, escaped to England. Fifteen years had elapsed before he could venture to return. He had never known the name of the water-bearer—was lodged in a different quarter—and, regarding his box as part of a property utterly lost, had almost forgotten even the circumstance. After he had been about six weeks in Paris, an old man called "do you remember me?"—"Cannot say I do. Never saw you before to my recollection."—"Perhaps you will remember this," producing the box from under an old coarse cloak. His noble procedure was nobly rewarded, and he lives respected by all his quarter as "the honest water-bearer."

The length to which we have extended these extracts, leave us little room for criticism, if they had not, (as we think,) superseded its necessity; we must, however, observe, that the work is well written; that the author discovers an intimate knowledge of the world and of human nature, and has depicted both with singular felicity.

The work is embellished with several admirable caricatures, designed by Cruickshanks, including a cellar in St. Giles's, where you may be accommodated with 'roast and boiled at two-pence per head;' and one of the 'Politicians,' whose bowl of punch is overturned, and their glasses broken, by the luckless intrusion of two cats from the skylight.

*Travels in Nubia.* By the late John Lewis Burckhardt.  
(Concluded.)

MR. BURCKHARDT enters into very minute details relative to the commerce of Shendy, (a nation of traders,) which is carried on with a very small capital, since none of its merchants possess more than about fifteen hundred Spanish dollars; and most of them carry on business with less than two hundred:—

'The market of Shendy is held upon a wide open space, between the two principal quarters of the town. Three rows of small shops, built of mud, one behind the other, in the shape of niches, about six feet in length, by four feet in depth, and covered by mats, are occupied by the more opulent tradesmen, who carry their goods to their respective shops every morning, and back to their houses in the evening, as these shops have no door by which they can be secured. The other merchants sit upon the ground, under a kind of shed or awning of mats, supported by three long poles, which can be turned in all directions, to keep off the sun, so as to afford sufficient shade to the seller and his customers at all times of the day. Similar awnings are in common use in the Hedjaz. The articles usually offered for sale in the daily market are the following:—

'*Butcher's Meat.*—Cows and camels are slaughtered daily for this supply, but sheep very seldom. I did not hear that they were in the habit of emasculating the animals destined for the shambles. The tallow is sold by particular merchants, who wash and cleanse it, in order to make it fit for anointing the hair and skin. Close by the butchers' shops are sold pieces of roasted fat, upon which and a little bouza, the Bedouins of the desert usually dine when they come to the town. The flesh is not weighed, but sold in lots of about two or three pounds weight. Weights, in general, are only met with in the merchants own houses; in the market they use for this purpose stones, by means of which the sellers have often an opportunity of cheating. The pound or rotolo is equal to that of Cairo.'

The slave trade is carried on here to an alarming extent. Mr. Burckhardt calculates that the number of slaves sold annually, in the market of Shendy, is not less than five thousand, of whom two thousand five hundred are carried off by the Souakin merchants, and fifteen hundred by those of Egypt; the remainder go to Dongola, and to the Bedouins, who live to the east of Shendy, towards the Albara and the Red Sea. These slaves, which are imported from Benda, Baadja, Fetigo, and Fertit, are mostly below the age of fifteen, and many of them only ten or eleven:—

'The Sedasy are the most esteemed: when I was at Shendy, a male of this class was worth fifteen or sixteen dollars, provided he bore the marks of the small pox, without which a boy is not worth more than two-thirds of that price; a female was worth from twenty to twenty-five Spanish dollars. The price of the male Khomasy was twelve, of the female fifteen dollars. The male Balegh seldom sells for more than eight or ten dollars; and there is but a small proportion of this class, because it is thought both in Egypt and Arabia, that no great dependance can be placed upon any slave, who has not been brought up in the owner's family from an early age. Hence there is a great reluctance to the purchasing of grown up slaves for domestic purposes, or even for labourers. The Baleghs are chiefly bought by the Bedouins, who employ them as shepherds. The Bisharein have many of them in all their encampments. Grown up female slaves, although past the age of beauty, sometimes sell for as much as thirty dollars, if they are known to be skilful in working, sewing, cooking, &c. In Syria few slaves are kept; those which I have seen there, are, for the greater part, imported by the caravans from Bagdad, and come from Souahel on the Mozambik coast.

'Few slaves are imported into Egypt, without changing masters several times, before they are finally settled in a family; for instance, those from Fertit are first collected on the borders of that country by petty merchants, who deal in Dhourra. These sell them to the traders of Kobbe, who repair to Fertit in small caravans for that purpose. At Kobbe they are bought up by the Darfour, or Kordofan traders, who transport them to Obeydh, in Kordofan. Here they generally pass into the hands of other Kordofan dealers, who carry them to Shendy, for the Soudan merchants commonly limit their speculations to a single market; thus the Kordofan people who trade to Darfour are different from those who visit Shendy, while, on the other hand, the Egyptians who trade to Shendy only, are different from those who proceed forward to Sennaar; and, in like manner, the Souakin traders are divided into Shendy and Sennaar merchants. At Shendy the slave is bought by some Egyptian or Abadbe. Upon his arrival in Upper Egypt he is disposed of either at Esne, Siout, or Cairo. In the two first places, entire lots of slaves are taken off by merchants, who sell them in retail at Cairo, or in the small towns of Upper Egypt, in each of which they stop for a few days, in their passage down the river. Even at Cairo they are not always finally disposed of in the first instance. The Khan of the slave traders, called Okal-ed-djelabe, which is near the mosque El Azher, is crowded with pedlars and petty traders, who often bargain with the merchants of Upper Egypt for slaves, immediately after their arrival, and content themselves with a small profit for the resale. Again, there are merchants from Smyrna and Constantinople residing constantly at Cairo, who deal in nothing but slaves; these persons export them from Alexandria, and it often happens that they pass through three or four hands, between Alexandria and their final destination in the northern provinces of Turkey. Such is the common lot of the unfortunate slave, but many instances happen of a still more rapid change of masters. At Shendy and Esne I have seen slaves bought and sold two or three times before they were finally removed from the market; after which, perhaps, if the master at the end of a few days' trial, did not find them answer his expectations, he would again put them up for sale, or exchange them for others. In fact, slaves are considered on the same level with any other kind of merchandize, and as such are continually passing from one merchant to another.'

'Slave boys are always allowed complete liberty within the yard of the house; but the grown up males, whose characters cannot be depended upon, or whose dispositions are unknown, are kept in close confinement, well watched, and often chained. On the journey they are tied to a long pole, one end of which is fastened to a camel's saddle, and the other, which is forked, is passed on each side of the slave's neck, and tied behind with a strong cord, so as to prevent him from drawing out his head; in addition to this, his right hand is also fastened to the pole, at a short distance from the head, thus leaving only his legs and left arm at liberty; in this manner he marches the whole day behind the camel; at night he is taken from the pole and put in irons. While on my route to Souakin I saw several slaves carried along in this way. Their owners were afraid of their escaping, or of becoming themselves the objects of their vengeance; and, in this manner, they would continue to be confined until sold to a master, who, intending to keep them, would endeavour to attach them to his person. In general, the traders seem greatly to dread the effects of sudden resentment in their slaves; and if a grown up boy is only to be whipped, his master first puts him in irons.

'It is not uncommon to hear of a slave-dealer selling his own children born of Negro women; and instances occur daily of their disposing of female slaves who are pregnant by them; in such cases, the future child of course becomes the property of the purchaser. Most of the traders have old slaves who have been for many years in their service; these are placed over the young slaves bought in trade, and become very useful in travelling; but even these, too, I have seen

their masters sell, after they had become members as it were of the family, merely because a high price was offered for them. It is in vain to expect in a slave trader any trace of friendship, gratitude, or compassion.'

Our author says, that at Shendy slavery has little dreadful in it, except the name, as the slaves are every where treated much like the children of the family, and always better than the free servants: he is, however, anxious for its abolition, and points out the best means of effecting it:—

'The laudable efforts made in Europe, and particularly by England, to abolish the slave trade, will, no doubt, in time, extend a beneficial influence over the Negro countries of Western and South-western Africa, from whence slaves have hitherto been drawn for the supply of the European traders; but there does not appear to be the smallest hope of the abolition of slavery in Africa itself. Were all the outlets of Soudan closed to the slave trade, and the caravans which now carry on the traffic with Barbary, Egypt, and Arabia, prevented from procuring further supplies, still slavery would universally prevail in Soudan itself; for, as long as those countries are possessed by Mussulmans, whose religion induces them to make war upon the idolatrous Negroes, whose domestic wants require a constant supply of servants and shepherds, and who considering slaves as a medium of exchange, in lieu of money, are as eager to obtain them as other nations might be to explore the African mines, slavery must continue to exist in the heart of Africa; nor can it cease until the Negroes shall become possessed of the means of repelling the attacks and resisting the oppression of their Mussulman neighbours. It is not from foreign nations that the blacks can hope for deliverance; this great work must be effected by themselves, and can be the result only of successful resistance. The European governments, who have settlements on the coasts of Africa, may contribute to it by commerce, and by the introduction among the Negroes of arts and industry, which must ultimately lead them to a superiority over the Mussulmans in war. Europe, therefore, will have done but little for the blacks, if the abolition of the Atlantic slave trade, which is trifling, when compared with the slavery of the interior, is not followed up by some wise and grand plan, tending to the civilization of the continent. None presents a fairer prospect than the education of the sons of Africa in their own country, and by their own countrymen, previously educated by Europeans. Faint hopes, however, can be entertained that the attention of European governments will be turned towards the remote and despised Negroes, while selfishness and a mistaken policy have prevented them from attending to the instruction of their own poor.'

We know not against what European government the last part of the paragraph may have been intended, since education is now making the most rapid progress, and is even extending itself to the country of all others the least likely to give it countenance, bigoted Spain.

In the description of Taka, we have some curious particulars respecting the Hadendoa Bedouins, the strongest of the four tribes who people that place:—

'The Hadendoa are very indolent; the business of the house is left to the wives and slaves, while the men pass the day either in paying an idle visit to some neighbouring encampment, or at home, reclined upon the angareyg, smoking their pipes, and generally going drunk to bed in the evening. To each other they shew great hospitality, but towards strangers I never saw a more pitiless race of people, which is the more remarkable from its being so contrary to the general disposition of the Bedouins, one of whose first considerations is how to supply the wants of the stranger. Inhospitability to strangers seems to be a marked characteristic both of this people and of those of Souakin. In the market village near our encampment, I could never obtain a drop of water with-

out paying for it in dhourra; and in our own encampment I was obliged to pay for the hire of a mat for a few minutes, to spread a little dhourra meal upon, in order to dry it in the sun. The poor Negro pilgrims who pass through Taka, in their way to Mekka, complain bitterly of this want of hospitality. Several of them were here during our stay, and lived in the encampment; they used to go round in the evening with their wooden bowls, to beg for a little bread, when they knew that the people were at supper; but from two hundred tents they never could collect enough to make a meal sufficient for themselves; and myself and companions were obliged to entertain two of them every evening, at supper. Where no feelings of generosity exist, the baser passions easily find access. The people of Taka are as noted for their bad faith as for their inhospitality; they live in continual broils with each other, which are not terminated by open hostility, but by a warfare of treachery, wherein each man endeavours to surprize and destroy his enemy by secret contrivances. Even in their own encampments they are armed with a spear, sword, and shield; and when they go to any distance it is generally in parties. During my stay, two men were murdered in the woods, by some persons unknown. The people of the caravan never ventured out of the encampment except in large parties; in the evening it was our practice to form a small caravan to proceed to the wells to fill our waterskins, taking care to keep as close together as possible. Treachery is not considered here as criminal or disgraceful, and the Hadendoa is not ashamed to boast of his bad faith, whenever it has led to the attainment of his object.

'Their own quarrels, and their national enmity to the Bisharein, with whom they are never known to be at peace, have rendered the people of Taka a warlike nation. They use the same weapons as the inhabitants of the Nile countries; bows and arrows are unknown amongst them. Their chiefs keep horses, and arm themselves with coats of mail. They are said to be brave, but I never saw scars on any part of their bodies except the back. The same remark applies to all the people of Nubia, where I have never seen any individuals with scars upon their breasts, while the backs of most of the men bear the marks of large wounds, in which they seem to pride themselves. The shield is said to protect the sides from blows. I found a custom here, which in my journey towards Dongola I had been told of, as existing among the Bisharein; when a young man boasts of his superior prowess, in the presence of another, the latter draws his knife and inflicts several flesh wounds in his own arms, shoulders, and sides; he then gives the knife to the boaster, who is bound in honour to inflict still deeper wounds upon his own body, or yield for ever in reputation to his antagonist. They are certainly a strong and hardy race of men; and are more robust and muscular than any Bedouins I ever saw. During winter they live almost wholly upon flesh and milk, tasting very little bread; and it is to this they attribute their strength. The only disease which they dread is the small-pox, which made great ravages among them last year, and had not yet entirely disappeared; a neighbouring encampment was still infected, and all communication had in consequence been cut off between it and the surrounding encampments. The disease was first brought here by the Souakin merchants, from whence it has spread over all the countries on the Nile.'

Among the pilgrims to Mecca, our author noticed a blind man:—

'He had come from Borgho, to the west of Darfour, in company with three others, and was continually led by a stick, which one of his companions held in his hands as he marched before him; I saw this man afterwards begging in the mosque at Mekka, and again at Medina, sitting on the threshold of the temple, exclaiming, as he appealed to the charity of the Hadjis, "I am blind, but the light of the word of God, and the love of his prophet, illumine my soul, and have been my guide from Soudan to this tomb!" He re-

ceived very liberal alms, and would probably return to his home richer than he left it.'

The Appendix to this highly interesting work, consists of an itinerary from the frontiers of Bornou, by Bahr, to Shendy.—Some notices on the countries of Sourdan, with vocabularies of the Bornu language.—A translation of the notices on Nubia, contained in Macrizi's History of Egypt, with notes.

The pleasure we have felt in following this enterprising traveller through countries so little frequented, makes us anxious for his remaining tours, which have been announced, and fill us with regret, that a gentleman so well suited by his talents and perseverance to explore Africa, should have been cut off in the bloom of youth and in the midst of his labours.

*A Description of the Western Islands of Scotland, including the Isle of Man: comprising an Account of their Geological Structure, with Remarks on their Agriculture, Scenery, and Antiquities.* By John Macculloch, M. D. 2 vols. 8vo. with a 4to. volume of Engravings. Edinburgh, 1819.

ALTHOUGH Dr. Macculloch's work is not of a popular nature, and is so much devoted to geology and mineralogy, as to be only duly appreciated by the lovers of those sciences, yet there are many passages in it of a general interest, and which will be read with pleasure by all who wish for information respecting those parts of the British empire so little known—the Western Isles of Scotland.

It will not excite surprise, that islands so remotely situated, and which have so little intercourse with the more cultivated parts of the empire, should be much behind in agriculture; and although considerable improvements have been introduced of late years, yet the old system is most generally practised:—

'The ancient system consisted in producing crops of corn, either with or without manure, as that could be procured from the richest fields; and this practice was continued till the land refused to bear any longer; such grass or weeds as happened to grow on it, were then suffered to accumulate for a series of years, and the same process was repeated in a perpetual rotation. The natural pastures were at the same time grazed by the indigenous cattle, by which they were almost invariably overstocked to such a degree, that numbers died at the end of every winter. Finally, the farms held in run-rig, or common, were overrun with superfluous horses. Such is still the fundamental part of the present system, where better practices have not been introduced; and these are far from bearing even a tolerable proportion to the whole.'

'Fallowing is not practised, perhaps it might not often be required. Where potatoes have been planted, either on old ridges or for the bringing-in of waste lands, a large quantity of manure is applied; and this serves generally for the crops of corn that are to succeed, although a small quantity is occasionally used with them. Barley thus succeeds to potatoes, while that again is followed by oats, for two or three, or even a greater number of years, till the land fairly refuses to yield more. In other cases, the barley is sown with manure, and the oats follow as before. Turnips, pease, beans, grass-seeds, and clover, are unknown; and the art of farming is thus at least reduced to a system which it requires but little knowledge to conduct. Not so, however, the expense, which is great, in proportion to the imperfection of the modes and the scantiness of the produce.

'The species of barley exclusively used in beer, which, from its early ripening and other qualities, is best adapted to the climate; and which seems not to admit of any better sub-

stitute, or of any other improvement, than that of a more careful selection of the seed.'

Were not Sir John Sinclair too far advanced in years, we would have him made governor of these islands, were it only to confer on them the benefits of drill husbandry and a better system of agriculture. Of the difficulties of migration in the Highlands, Dr. Macculloch gives the following account. He was then at Vatersa:—

'It was settled in the evening, that we should visit Barra Head on the following morning. Unfortunately, the laird's only boat had been left on the beach, without an anchor, a few days before, whence it was carried away by the tide and dashed to pieces. But there was an expedient at hand, as there was another boat in the island, and it was borrowed for the occasion. In the morning, when ready to embark, it was discovered that the borrowed oars had been negligently left on the beach, on the preceding evening, and had, like the former boat, been carried away by the tide. There was now a boat, but there were no oars. Oars could be borrowed somewhere; they would be ready at some time in the day,—at twelve or one o'clock,—it would not be many hours too late,—we could only be benighted in returning. By the time the oars had been sent for, it was discovered that the boatmen and servants were all absent, cutting peat in a neighbouring island. But it was possible to find another expedient for this, by procuring some of the islanders. A messenger was accordingly sent for four men. In the meantime, the borrowed oars of one fisherman were fitted to the borrowed boat of another; but alas! all the islanders were absent, making kelp. Thus the day was spent in arranging expedients and in removing obstacles. Thus is life spent in the Highlands; and thus will it be spent by him who trusts to Highland arrangements for the accomplishment of his objects.'

The manufacture of kelp is almost the only one which may be said to exist in these islands; its establishment has not only considerably increased the value of the estates, but it has also created a demand for labour before unknown:—

'The total produce of the western islands in kelp varies from 5000 to 6000 tons, of which two-thirds are the produce of the Long Island; the result of its highly-indented shores, and of the consequent extent of surface, as well as of the superior tranquillity of the waters in which the plants grow.

'In general, it may be remarked, that the kelp is reserved by the proprietor, and manufactured on his account,—a very questionable piece of policy in some points of view. A large portion of the population is employed for the three summer months in the manufacture, which is so laborious and severe as to have no parallel in this country; certainly, at least, not at the same rate of wages. This labour has been called compulsory, and in one sense it may be considered a servitude, since it is generally the condition of tenure, and either the whole or a portion of the rent by which the tenant holds his farm.

'As far as relates to the details of this manufacture, they seem to have been, for some years past, in a state of rapid improvement, and to have attained, on many of the estates, in consequence of the attention of the proprietors or their agents, all the perfection of which they are susceptible. The time occupied in it, as I before remarked, is about three months, namely, June, July, and August. Drift-weed, thrown on the shores by storms, and consisting chiefly of fucus digitatus and saccharinus, is used to a certain extent when fresh and uninjured; but the greater part is procured by cutting other plants of this tribe at low-water. Soda is well known to abound most in the hardest fuci, the serratus, digitatus, nodosus, and vesiculosus. On some estates they are cut biennially, on others once in three years; nor does it seem to be ascertained what are the relative advantages or disadvantages of these different practices. The weed is burnt in a coffer of stones, a con-

struction which, however rude it may appear, seems fully adequate to the purpose.

The method of landing the weed after cutting, is simple and ingenious. A rope of heath or birch-twigs is laid at low-water, beyond the portion cut, and the ends are brought up on the shore. At high-water, the whole being afloat together, the rope is drawn at each end, and the included material is thus compelled, at the retiring tide, to settle on the line of high-water mark.

The quantity of sea-weed required to make a ton of kelp, is estimated, as I have already noticed, at twenty-four tons, but varies, according to the state of its moisture; and hence a conception of the labour employed in this manufacture may be formed, since the whole must be cut, carried on horses, spread out, dried, and stacked, before it is ready for burning.

Of peat, we have the following notice:

The peat in this country is in general of considerable depth, reaching from ten to twenty feet downwards, and almost always incumbent on a body of alluvial gravel, or on the bare rock. In some situations, it is found to repose on a bed of fine and soft but not tenacious pale greyish clay, which, on burning, is converted into a white powder, and applied by the natives to the purposes of scouring or polishing metallic utensils. It is a porcelain clay, resulting from the decomposition of the felspar in the gneiss.

The peat of North Ulst, as well as that of many other parts of the Long Island, is in a state of extreme decomposition at its lower parts. On this account, it forms, when dried, a compact substance of great density, which is incapable of being again affected by exposure to rain, and which requires, therefore, no protection when completed. Its specific gravity is much greater than that of ordinary peat. It burns with so bright a flame as to supersede the necessity of light in the cottages of the natives, and with a glow of heat equal to that of the inferior kinds of coal; while it is capable of being formed into a compact charcoal, fit for the purposes of the blacksmith.

As the growth of peat necessarily keeps pace with that of the vegetables from which it is formed, it is evident that the cessation of the one is implied in that of the other. Hence the necessity, now at length understood, of replacing the living turf on the bog whence peat has been cut; a condition now required in all leases where liberty to cut it is included. No vegetable seems willingly to attach itself to pure peat; and thus a bog once bared to a sufficient depth remains naked. Where the decomposition is but incipient, the process of vegetation is renewed and continued without difficulty.

The labour of making peat is an evil which it would be most desirable to see remedied; since it occupies a great portion of the summer, employs many hands in the making, and many animals in the carriage; while even all the labour which can be commanded is sometimes insufficient to procure an adequate supply. It is estimated at a third of the total expense of the farm; an estimate probably, in some cases, not beyond the truth. In this island, however, and generally through the Long Island, the vicinity of the peat, together with its compact quality and goodness, renders it a much cheaper article.

In the description of Lewis, an island about forty miles long and twenty broad, we have a curious account of its inhabitants, who differ much from those in the other islands:—

Numerous fishing-boats are generally to be seen about the Butt, manned each by nine men, rowing eight oars in double banks, a practice no where else to be observed. The people themselves are also strikingly dissimilar to the general population of the islands; preserving their unmixed Danish blood in as great purity at least as the inhabitants of Shetland; and, probably, with much of the manners and appearance of the times when this country was an integrant part of the Norwegian kingdom. They constitute even now an indepen-

dent colony among their neighbours, who still consider them as a distinct people, and almost view them in the light of foreigners. The district which they possess is by far the most fertile and valuable part of the island, and they occupy it in the ancient slovenly system of joint-tenantry. They are reputed industrious fishermen, but they only fish for their own consumption; appearing to abound in food, as they are all fat and ruddy. They possess almost universally the blue eye and sanguine complexion of their original ancestors; and, with their long matted hair, never profaned by comb or scissors, cannot be distinguished from the present race, as we still meet them manning the northern ships. Notwithstanding their rude aspect and uncouth dress, they are mild in manners, and are esteemed acute and intelligent.

The author's account of the Flannan Islands affords a good extract, which is complete in its description:

These islands are seven in number, and lie seventeen miles to the north-west of the Gallan Head in Lewis, to which estate they belong. The largest appears to contain about eighty acres, the second perhaps twenty, and the rest are of much smaller dimensions. The two first are fully stocked with sheep, although the traveller, who has found some difficulty in climbing to the surface, may be at a loss to conjecture by what means they are carried up the cliffs, or removed. The smaller are unoccupied, a circumstance rare in the Highlands, and arising, here, only from their inconvenient situation.

The annual rent of the whole is 10*l.*, a price paid rather for the birds by which they are inhabited, than for the grass they produce. Various sea-fowl, of the species usually found in these seas, have here established their colonies; but the most numerous is the puffin. These literally cover the ground; so that when, on the arrival of a boat, they all come out of their holes, the green surface of the island appears like a meadow thickly enamelled with daisies. The soil is so perforated by these burrows, that it is scarcely possible to take a step on solid ground. On any alarm, a concert of a most extraordinary nature commences. Those who have not frequented similar coasts, will perhaps smile, when the effect produced by the united cries of the various sea-fowl, is called harmonious. Separately considered, the individuals cannot be esteemed peculiarly melodious, yet the total effect is no less pleasing than extraordinary; and may not unaptly be compared to the ancient ecclesiastical compositions, which abound in a perpetual recurrence of fugue and imitation on a few simple notes. It requires no effort of the imagination to trace the sound of the flute, the hautboy, and the bassoon, in the cries of the several birds; the upper parts being maintained by the terns and the gulls, the tenors by the auk tribes, while the basses are occasionally sounded by the cormorants. The cultivated musician will, independently of the general effect, derive pleasure from the perpetual repetition, and the apparently perfect resolution of the discords; while the whole is varied by the pauses which are occasionally interposed, and by the swelling of the sounds on the breeze; or by their alternate increase and diminution, as the alarm subsides and is again renewed.

The Isle of Sky has been celebrated for its spar caves, one of which afforded an asylum to the Pretender, when the failure of his enterprize rendered his escape necessary to save his life. Of these caves the doctor thus writes:—

The promontory of Strathaird is low at its extremity, being there formed of those stratified rocks which constitute a portion of the adjoining shores of Loch Eishort, but it rises gradually towards Blaven by a succession of hills of trap, presenting no remarkable features. It is for the most part surrounded by cliffs, rarely exceeding sixty or seventy feet in height, and cut smoothly down, so as to afford a perfect display of the succession of the strata of which they are composed. On the eastern side these are remarkable for the very

extraordinary number of caves they contain, and for the fissures by which they are intersected. These are rarely of any great dimensions, but are so numerous, that they sometimes occupy nearly as much space in a given distance, as the solid parts of the cliffs themselves. Twenty or thirty are sometimes found in the course of a few hundred yards, the interstices having a resemblance to the ends of detached walls placed in a parallel manner. They are the consequences of trap veins which have been washed away.

Few of these caves have been explored; but one has acquired historic celebrity, from its having been among the numerous places of temporary refuge inhabited by Prince Charles, during his concealment. Another has recently become the cause of great resort to Sky, on account of its stalactitic concretions, being popularly distinguished by the name of the Spar Cave; it lies on the estate of Mr. Macalister, and is too well known to require any more accurate description of its locality. This cave is accessible from the cliffs above, for a short time only, at low-water; but, by means of a boat, it may be visited at any time in moderate weather, or with the wind off the shore. The entrance is little less striking than the interior, and, to the admirer of the picturesque, it presents a scene even more attractive. This is formed by a fissure in the cliff, extending for a considerable way, and bounded on each side by high and parallel walls, its gloom being partially illuminated by reflected light, and its silence scarcely disturbed by the wash of the surf without. A narrow and obstructed opening leads unexpectedly into the cave, which, for a distance of about an hundred feet, is dark, wet, and dreary. A steep acclivity, formed of a white stalagmite, then occurs, which being surmounted with some difficulty, the whole interior comes into view, covered with stalactites, disposed in all the grotesque forms which these incrustations so commonly assume. Lively imagination may here indulge in the discovery of fanciful resemblances; and the concretions have accordingly received names more descriptive of the fancies of the spectators than of their real forms. Considering the great depth of this cave, and its present distance from the sea, we are inclined to inquire by what means so extensive an excavation could have been formed, and how the rock which has fallen from it has been removed. It is probable, that the depth of water at the face of the cliffs, was once, such as to permit the ready access of the sea to them, and that, at this period, the excavations so numerous on this shore were produced. The subsequent accumulation of rubbish formed by its action, has, in later times, produced the slope or shore, which now excludes it from further access, and protects the cliffs from further demolition.

When speaking of caves, we cannot omit the cave of Fingal, in the Isle of Staffa, which has been so much celebrated and so often described:—

This cave lies near the eastern end of the principal face, a small part only of the columnar range being visible at that side; and, from this cause, it is deficient in that external symmetry of position, which forms so beautiful a feature in the little cave last described. The outline of the aperture, when viewed in such a light as to show it distinctly, is perpendicular at the sides, and terminates above in that species of Gothic arch, which has been termed the contrasted; a form which, from its obvious want of geometrical strength, is, in architecture, unpleasing, however abstractedly elegant its curvature may be. Here it is in character, and the defect is not felt. The height, from the top of the cliff to the top of the arch, is thirty, and, from the latter to the surface of the water at mean-tide, sixty-six feet. On the western side, the pillars which bound it are thirty-six feet high, while at the eastern they are only eighteen, although their upper ends are nearly in the same horizontal line. This difference arises from the height of the broken columns which form the causeway on the eastern side, and which cover and conceal the lower part of those belonging to the front. The breadth at the entrance, is forty-two feet, as nearly as it is possible to

ascertain it; since the gradual variation of the surfaces, as the curve retires on each hand, prevents the adoption of a very precise point of measurement. The height of the cave within diminishes very soon to a mean measure, varying from fifty to forty-four feet; which latter, in the same state of the tide, is also the altitude at the extremity. The mean breadth is equal to that of the aperture, till near the innermost part; but at the extremity, it diminishes to twenty-two feet; preserving, as will be seen by these measures, a considerable degree of regularity throughout. The length is two hundred and twenty-seven feet. The sides of this cave are, like the front, columnar, and, in a general sense, perpendicular, though, when accurately viewed, they are, in the same way, far from possessing that geometric regularity, which accompanies all the views of it hitherto published. The columns are frequently broken and irregularly grouped, so as to catch a variety of direct and reflected tints mixed with unexpected shadows, that produce a picturesque effect, which no regularity could have given. The ceiling is various in different parts of the cave. It is deeply channelled in the middle, by a fissure parallel to the sides, and prolonged from the point of the exterior arch to the end. That portion which lies on each side of this fissure, toward the outward part of the cave, is similar to the upper incumbent bed, being formed of a minutely fractured rock. In the middle it is composed of the broken ends of columns, which produce an ornamental and somewhat architectural effect; while, at the end, a portion of each kind of rock enters into its formation. From attending only to one or other of these portions, different observers have described the ceiling in a different manner, and each party has accused the other of misrepresentation. The surfaces of the columns above, are sometimes distinguished from each other by the infiltration of carbonate of lime into their interstices. As the sea never ebbs entirely out, it forms the only floor to this cave; but the broken range of columns, which produces the exterior causeway, is continued on each side within it.

Dr. Maculloch refutes the accounts given by Pennant and other writers respecting the migration of the herring shoals, which, he says, is purely visionary. He says,—

‘It is at any rate certain, that the herring breeds on the west coast of Scotland, as the young fish are found throughout that sea immediately after their exclusion. They do not, therefore, arrive from the Arctic seas, as Mr. Pennant imagined. Neither, on their first arrival, do they come in shoals. On the contrary, they are so scattered, that they cannot be taken by the net in the usual way. At that time, they are often caught in considerable abundance by a fly, or any bright substance; often by new-tinned hooks, which they seize with great avidity; presenting both an amusing sport and a profitable occupation, as one man has been known thus to take a barrel and a half during the few days this fishery lasts. So far from their being migratory to the extent supposed, it would also appear, on the contrary, that their residence is in the deep water all round the northern coasts of Britain; since, throughout nearly the whole year, they are taken by the deep-sea fishers; forming the most profitable and steady branch of this fishery, for a long time exclusively possessed by the Dutch, but now much followed by busses from Scotland; of the commerce of which, the taking and the exportation of the herring forms an important branch.

‘From the deep water they arrive early in the summer on the western coast, but are rarely taken in abundance till August; recently, not till September. On the eastern side of the island they are later, but extend much farther along the shore; while, of late, they are also much more plentiful on this than on the former coast. This change of haunts is one of the most obscure points in the history of the herring. It has visited and deserted in succession almost every loch on the west coast; and in those which were once the seat of the fishery, not a fish has for many years been taken. At present,

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they seem to prefer the inlets of the Clyde; formerly, the northern lochs were most productive. With that change from the north to the south, the season of shoaling has also become much later.'

Although we have passed over the more important parts of this work—its scientific researches, yet we must do the author the justice to say, that in this department, he has exhibited additional claims to that deservedly high reputation which he holds in the scientific world.

The engravings, which principally consist of maps and illustrations of the geology of the island, are well executed.

*Poems never before printed, written by John Gay, Author of the 'Beggar's Opera,' 'Fairy Tales,' &c. With a Sketch of his Life, from the MS. of the Rev. Joseph Baller, his Nephew. Edited by Henry Lee, Author of 'Poetic Impressions,' &c. To which are added, Two New Tales by the Editor. 12mo. pp. 147. London, 1820.*

ALTHOUGH we should regret that any relic of genius like that of Gay should be lost, yet we think some injustice may be done to the memory of an author, by publishing those less finished, or, perhaps, even self-condemned productions, which the author himself withheld from the public. Mr. Lee, in his preface, is very anxious to furnish substantial proof that the chair alluded to, not only belonged to Gay, but was actually his favourite seat. About twelve years ago this chair was sold among some of the effects of Mrs. Williams, niece of the Rev. Joseph Baller, who was the nephew of Gay. Since the death of Mrs. Williams, the chair became the property of a Mr. Clarke, of Barnstaple, and was again sold, with the rest of his property, by public auction. It was then bought by a person of the name of Symmonds. The circumstance coming to the knowledge of Mr. Lee, he prevailed on Mr. Symmonds to let him have the chair; and then sent it to a Mr. Crook, a cabinet maker, who gives the following account of his share of the business:—

'The chair was bought at an auction, by Mr. Symmonds, of this town, from whose house it came to mine. I was desired to repair it; and, on taking out the drawer in front, which was somewhat broken, I found, at the back part of the chair, a *concealed drawer*, which was ingeniously fastened with a small wooden bolt. Those who have lately had possession of the chair never knew of this concealed drawer; it was full of manuscript papers, some of which appeared to have slipped over, as I found them stuck in the bottom or seat of the chair. A respectable tradesman of this town was present when I made the discovery. The owner of the chair was immediately sent for, and the whole of the papers safely delivered into his hands. I am, &c.'

Having said so much of the history of the chair, we now come to its contents, which consist of a poem, entitled, 'The Ladies' Petition,' addressed to the House of Commons.—'A Letter to a Young Lady.'—'An Address to his Chair;' and eight or ten shorter pieces. The editor says, none of these productions have been before the public; this is an assertion we are much disposed to doubt, since more than one of them is familiar to us, although we cannot at present say where we have met with them. We select one of the shortest of these poems:—

**'TO MY CHAIR.**

Thou faithful vassal to my wayward will!  
Thou patient midwife to my labouring skill;

My pen and ink's choice cell,—my paper's pillow!  
Thou steady friend, e'en were thy master mellow.  
My seat!—I visit not the proud St. Stephen;—  
St. Stephen knows not me, so we are even.  
A seat obtained not by a threat or bribe,  
But free, uninfluenced by an influenced tribe:  
Thou art my inheritance,—I boast no other,—  
My friend *unique*! for thou hast not a brother,  
Surrounded by my friends, secure from foes,  
By thee upheld, I calmly seek repose.  
Soothed by thy comfort, my ideas spread—  
Aerial forms assemble round my head!  
Titles and honours court me—in the air—  
A proof that I've been *building castles* there!

Days, months, and years I've musing sat in thee;  
And when grown pettish, thou ne'er answered me:  
A quality this is, so rarely seen,  
'Twould be a jewel might adorn a queen.

My study thou! my favourite resting place,—  
My tabernacle where I pray for grace!  
My spouse, for in thy arms I oft recline,  
And hope, tho' pleas'd with progeny of thine,  
That no base offering ever may be mine.'

We will not say that these verses were not written by Gay, but we will venture to assert, that were he living, he would not own them. Indeed, however conclusive the history of the chair may be in some respects, yet there is strong internal evidence that these poems were not written by Gay, notwithstanding the positive assurances of the editor as to the identity of the handwriting of the bard.

Mr. Lee, author of 'Poetic Impressions,' &c. appears to have been most anxious to eke out this volume, when he added two new tales of his own to it. We trust they were written before he became possessed of Gay's chair, for, if not, we are sorry to say that it has had no magical effect on his genius. The tales will, however, by this means, obtain a circulation which otherwise they could never have obtained; and that, we suspect, was the author's sole object in thrusting them into this volume.

*Redmond the Rebel; or, They met at Waterloo. 3 vols. 12mo. pp. 777. London, 1820.*

THERE is, perhaps, no species of literary composition, in which so many persons engage, and so few succeed, as in that of novel writing. Every boarding school miss who has barely entered her teens, and is able to string words and sentences together, if her imagination is of a romantic cast, forms some tedious love tale, which she will prevail on her friends to print; and thus, among her own family and friends, at least, she will obtain the reputation of an author. Imagination, however fertile, is not sufficient to enable a person to write a good novel, it must be accompanied by an intimate knowledge of human nature, and the talent to delineate it. Such requisites are united in several novel writers of the present day, among whom we must class the author of *Redmond the Rebel*; the story is natural and interesting, and the characters, though diversified in their passions and feelings, are well drawn; nor is the author less happy in the descriptive. Added to this, the work has a good moral tendency, and may be put into the hands of the most fastidious female, without subjecting her to a blush. This is no mean recommendation of a novel of the present day, when the town is inundated with productions of an opposite character.

## Original Communications.

## ANECDOTES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE LITERARY CHRONICLE.

SIR,—I hereby send you some anecdotes, which may amuse your readers, and which are communicated from the cradle of

Sir, your's respectfully,

AN OLD NURSE.

*The Man and his three Wives.*—A poor man used to find fault with his wife for spending so much money and time in the mending of his clothes,—thinking she might employ herself to greater advantage, but death soon deprived him of her services, and he courted a second, to whom he related his first wife's plan. 'Oh dear!' said she, 'I shall not be so silly, for I have a much better plan;' so he took this for granted, and married her. When his clothes required the thread and needle, she invariably tied the rents into *knots*, the quickest way, assuredly, of repairing the breach; however, he said nothing, as he was not applied to for money; but she was unexpectedly removed by death. Not yet discouraged by his sudden bereavements, he addresses a *third*, reproaching the conduct of his former wives; when she cried, in the pleasure of laughter, 'ha, ha, ha,—ridiculous! I neither sew nor tie knots,—I know you will approve of me;' so he married her, and she was as good as her word, for she *rent* every piece into twain, and had not some rapacious disease removed her also to the grave, he must have been in a tattered condition. Now, he seemed to have had enough of the connubial state, and, in the natural experience of his heart, he exclaims,—'God bless *Piecepatch*, and I wish *Knitknot* well; but the de'el take *Rendall*!'

*The feeling Merchant.*—Two merchants on change, having heard of the misfortunes of a third, proposed doing something to assist him, and, after having pitied him and his family, with 'Oh dears!' 'I am sorry,' and 'tis a sad concern,' the one said to the other, 'well friend, what do you mean to give him, and how do you feel?'—'Why, I can hardly tell,' he replied;—'Indeed!' said the other, 'I can, for I *already feel* five hundred,' pulling his hand out of his pocket, and presenting *five hundred pounds* for the unfortunate man.

*The left-handed Reader.*—An ignorant servant, who usually went to church on a Sunday afternoon, of course, though she could not read, must take a prayer book. A footman, who stood behind her, observing she held it wrong, jogged her, and whispered, 'my dear, I beg your pardon, but your book is *upside down*.' 'Oh, I thank you kindly,' she replied, 'but I am *left-handed*.'

## ON THE BISSEXTILE, OR LEAP-YEAR.

THE ancient chronologists reckoned three hundred and sixty-five days to a year. But when astronomy began to deserve the name of a science, astronomers discovered that the length of the solar year, or the interval which the sun required to move through the twelve signs of the ecliptic, was nearly three hundred and sixty-five days, six hours. At that time, Julius Cæsar, who was the chief augur among the Romans, ordered that a day should be added to the usual number every *fourth* year, and that this addi-

tional day should be the sixth day of the Calends of March; and the chronological account, thus established, was called the Julian account, in honour of its founder. Here it may be proper to observe, for the information of some of our youthful readers, that the Romans divided the several months of the year into Calends, Ides, and Nones; and that their mode of reckoning was retrograde from the first day of the month. The 1st of March, for instance, was the first Calend of that month; the 28th of February was the second Calend of March; so the 24th of February was the sixth Calend of the same month. The sixth Calend of March, therefore, in every fourth year, according to the Julian account, was reckoned twice over; hence that day was called Bissextile, and this appellation was also extended to every year in which it took place. The term Leap-Year arises from the day in the week *leaping* one day forward beyond the common years. Thus, for instance, the year 1819 commenced on Friday, and the present year, 1820, on Saturday; but 1821 will begin on Monday, thus completely leaping over Sunday, in consequence of the additional day contained in February this year, that month containing twenty-nine days.

As the science of astronomy advanced, and both instruments and observations became more accurate, astronomers were able to detect inaccuracies in the works and observations of their predecessors, and found that the length of the solar year was only three hundred and sixty-five days, five hours, forty-eight minutes, and fifty-seven seconds. Pope Gregory XIII having found that the error of the Julian reckoning, in the year 1582, amounted to ten days, ordered a reformation of the calendar, and omitted these ten days, by calling the 11th of March the 21st. In order, also, to avoid the error that thus arose from adding six hours to three hundred and sixty-five of every year, or rather one day to every fourth year, he ordained that every hundredth year, which, according to the Julian reckoning, was to be a bissextile, should be a common year of only three hundred and sixty-five days, except every four-hundredth year, which was to be a bissextile, or leap-year. Thus the reckoning was brought extremely near the truth; and the account was called the Gregorian, or new style, in opposition to the Julian, or old style.

The very near agreement of the new style with the true solar year caused its early adoption by several European states; and a diet, consisting of a body of Protestants of the German empire, held at Ratisbon, in 1700, took the subject into consideration; and finding that the error in the old account then amounted to eleven days, decreed that those days should be omitted in the month of February, in the following year. These regulations were then adopted by various other states.

In the year 1752, the same method of correcting the general account of time was adopted in England, on the authority of an act passed in the preceding session of Parliament, in which it was directed that the year should in future commence on the 1st of January, instead of the 25th of March, as it had previously done:—That the natural day immediately following the 2d of September, in that year, should be reckoned the 14th, and thus omitting the eleven intermediate days of the common calendar. It was also enacted at the same time, in order that the calendar might be preserved from error in future times, that the year 1800, with the last year of some other centuries inserted in the bill, should be a common year of only three

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hundred and sixty-five days; and, consequently, not be reckoned a bissextile, or leap-year, as it otherwise would have been but for this regulation. The month of February, therefore, in the calendar of that year, contained only twenty-eight days.

It deserves to be remarked, in connection with this subject, that previous to that time it was customary to express the dates of writings between the 1st of January and the 25th of March by means of fractional numbers, denoting both the present and preceding years. The fraction was formed of the digits which expressed the past and the present year, the former constituting the numerator and the latter the denominator; and this fraction was then subjoined to the figures that were common to them both. Thus, the 25th of January, 1745, was written 25th January, 174 $\frac{1}{2}$ ; and in the same manner for other dates.—*Time's Telescope*.

### HISTORY OF THE WEATHER.

It is very difficult to ascertain the precise condition of the weather in distant ages. The thermometer was not invented till 1590, by the celebrated Sanctorio; nor was that valuable instrument reduced to a correct standard before the year 1724, by the skill of Fahrenheit. We have hence no observations of temperature which go further back than a century. Prior to this period we must glean our information from the loose and scanty notices which are scattered through the old chronicles, relative to the state of the harvest, the quality of the vintage, or the endurance of frost and snow in the winter. Great allowance, however, should be made for the spirit of exaggeration, and the love of the marvellous, which infect all those rude historical monuments. Toaldo and Pilgram have, with incredible industry, prosecuted this research; and, from a bulky work of the latter, printed in the German language at Vienna, in 1788, we shall select the most remarkable passages concerning the state of the weather for more than a thousand years back, and combine with them the observations made by Professor Pfaff, of Kiel. The following years are noted for the severity of the winter:—

In A. D. 401, the Black Sea was entirely frozen over.

In 462, the Danube was frozen, so that Theodomer marched over the ice, to avenge his brother's death in Swabia.

In 545, the cold was so intense in winter, that the birds allowed themselves to be caught by the hand.

In 763, not only the Black Sea, but the Straits of the Dardanelles was frozen over. The snow in some places rose fifty feet high; and the ice was so heaped in the cities as to push down the walls.

In 800, the winter was intensely cold.

In 822, the great rivers of Europe, such as the Danube, the Elbe, and the Seine, were so hard frozen as to bear heavy waggons for a month.

In 860, the Adriatic was frozen.

In 874, the winter was very long and severe. The snow continued to fall from the beginning of November to the end of March, and incumbered the ground so much, that the forests were inaccessible for the supply of fuel.

In 891, and again in 893, the vines were killed by the frost, and the cattle perished in their stalls.

In 991, the winter lasted very long, with extreme seve-

riety. Every thing was frozen, the crops totally failed, and famine and pestilence closed the year.

In 1044, great quantities of snow lay on the ground. The vines and fruit trees were destroyed, and famine ensued.

In 1067, the cold was so intense, that most of the travellers in Germany were frozen to death on the roads.

In 1124, the winter was uncommonly severe, and the snow lay very long.

In 1133, it was extremely cold in Italy; the Po was frozen from Cremona to the sea; the heaps of snow rendered the roads impassable, the wine casks were burst, and even the trees split, by the action of the frost, with immense noise.

In 1179, the snow was eight feet deep in Austria, and lay till Easter. The crops and vintage failed, and a great murrain consumed the cattle.

The winters of 1209 and 1210 were both of them very severe, insomuch that the cattle died for want of fodder.

In 1216, the Po frozen fifteen ells deep, and wine burst the casks.

In 1234, the Po was again frozen, and loaded waggons crossed the Adriatic to Venice. A pine forest was killed by the frost at Ravenna.

In 1236, the Danube was frozen to the bottom, and remained long in that state.

In 1261, the frost was most intense in Scotland, and the ground bound up. The Cattegat was frozen between Norway and Jutland.

In 1281, such quantities of snow fell in Austria as to bury the very houses.

In 1292, the Rhine was frozen over at Breysach, and bore loaded waggons. One sheet of ice extended between Norway and Jutland, so that travellers passed with ease; and, in Germany, 600 peasants were employed to clear away the snow, for the advance of the Austrian army.

In 1305, the rivers in Germany were frozen; and much distress was occasioned by the scarcity of provisions and forage.

In 1316, the crops wholly failed in Germany. Wheat, which some years before sold in England at 6s. a quarter, now rose to 2l.

In 1323, the winter was so severe, that both horse and foot passengers travelled over the ice from Denmark to Lubec and Dantzic.

In 1339, the crops failed in Scotland; and such a famine ensued, that the poorer sort of people were reduced to feed on grass, and many of them perished miserably in the fields. Yet, in England, wheat was at this time sold so low as 3s. 4d. a quarter.

In 1344, it was clear frost from November to March, and all the rivers in Italy were frozen over.

In 1392, the vineyards and orchards were destroyed by the frost, and the trees torn to pieces.

The year 1408 had one of the coldest winters ever remembered. Not only the Danube was frozen over, but the sea between Gothland and Oeland, and between Norway and Denmark, so that wolves driven from their forests, came over the ice into Jutland: In France, the vineyards and orchards were destroyed.

In 1423, both the North Sea and the Baltic were frozen. Travellers passed on foot from Lubeck to Dantzic. In France, the frost penetrated into the very cellars. Corn and wine failed, and men and cattle perished for want of food.

The successive winters of 1432, 1433, and 1434, were uncommonly severe. It snowed forty days without interruption. All the rivers of Germany were frozen; and the very birds took shelter in the towns. The price of wheat rose, in England, to 27s. a quarter, but was reduced to 5s. in the following year.

In 1460, the Baltic was frozen, and both horse and foot passengers crossed over the ice from Denmark to Sweden. The Danube likewise continued frozen two months; and the vineyards in Germany were destroyed.

In 1468, the winter was so severe in Flanders, that the wine distributed to the soldiers was cut in pieces with hatchets.

In 1544, the same thing happened again, the wine being frozen into solid lumps.

In 1548, the winter was very cold and protracted. Between Denmark and Rostock, sledges drawn by horses or oxen travelled over the ice.

In 1564, and again in 1565, the winter was extremely severe over all Europe. The Scheldt froze so hard as to support loaded waggons for three months.

In 1571, the winter was severe and protracted. All the rivers in France were covered with hard and solid ice; and fruit trees, even in Languedoc, were killed by the frost.

In 1594, the weather was so severe, that the Rhine and the Scheldt were frozen, and even the sea at Venice.

The year 1608 was uncommonly cold, and snow lay of immense depth even at Padua. Wheat rose, in the Windsor market, from 36s. to 56s. a quarter.

In 1621 and 1622, all the rivers of Europe were frozen, and even the Zuyder Zee. A sheet of ice covered the Hellespont; and the Venetian fleet was choked up in the lagoons of the Adriatic.

In 1655, the winter was very severe, especially in Sweden. The excessive quantities of snow and rain which fell did great injury in Scotland.

The winters of 1658, 1659, and 1660, were intensely cold.—The rivers in Italy bore heavy carriages; and so much snow had not fallen at Rome for several centuries. It was in 1658 that Charles X, of Sweden, crossed the Little Belt over the ice, from Holstein to Denmark, with his whole army, foot and horse, followed by the train of baggage and artillery. During these years the price of grain was nearly doubled in England; a circumstance which contributed, among other causes, to the restoration.

In 1670, the frost was most intense in England and in Denmark, both the Little and Great Belt being frozen.

In 1684, the winter was excessively cold. Many forest trees, and even the oaks in England, were split by the frost. Most of the hollies were killed. Coaches drove along the Thames, which was covered with ice eleven inches thick. Almost all the birds perished.

In 1691, the cold was so excessive, that the famished wolves entered Vienna, and attacked the cattle, and even men.

The winter of 1695 was extremely severe and protracted. The frost in Germany began in October, and continued till April, and many people were frozen to death.

The years 1697 and 1699 were nearly as bad. In England, the price of wheat, which, in preceding years, had seldom reached to 30s. a quarter, now amounted to 71s.

In 1709 occurred that famous winter, called, by distinction, the cold winter. All the rivers and lakes were frozen, and even the seas, to the distance of several miles from the shore. The frost is said to have penetrated three yards into the ground.—Birds and wild beasts were strewed dead in the fields, and men perished by thousands in their houses. The more tender shrubs and vegetables in England were killed; and wheat rose in price from 21. to 41. a quarter. In the south of France, the olive plantations were almost entirely destroyed; nor have they yet recovered that fatal disaster. The Adriatic sea was quite frozen over, and even the coasts of the Mediterranean, about Genoa; and the citron and orange groves suffered extremely in the finest parts of Italy.

In 1716, the winter was very cold. On the Thames booths were erected and fairs held.

In 1726, the winter was so intense, that people travelled in sledges across the Strait, from Copenhagen to the province Scania, in Sweden.

In 1729, much injury was done by the frost, which lasted from October till May. In Scotland, multitudes of cattle and sheep were buried in the snow; and many of the forest-trees in other parts of Europe were killed.

The successive winters of 1731 and 1732 were likewise extremely cold.

*(To be concluded in our next.)*

## Original Poetry.

TO —.

BELOV'D of my heart,  
O never deem me  
So base as to part  
With my constancy;  
For I'd rather for ever  
Be chain'd to despair  
Than cease to adore thee,  
Thou exquisite fair.

To me thou hast been,  
And ever shall be,  
The chief of my soul's  
Idolatry!  
Tho' years glide away,  
And I see thee not,  
Thine image shall never  
With me be forgot.

Tho' many there are  
Whose vows have been plighted—  
Who've shrunk from the flower  
Their falsehood blighted;  
O think not that I  
So accur'd would be,  
As to win thy love  
Then fly from thee!

For as gloom is dispell'd  
When vanisheth night,  
And nature looks gay  
In the sun's young light,  
So I, when my heart  
Is with sorrow oppress'd,  
In the sun of thy smiles  
Feel truly blest!

WILFORD.

Jan. 8, 1820.

## THE BIRTH-DAY.

BY J. D. NEWMAN, FEB. 4TH, 1820.

Why sparkles with pleasure my eye?  
 Why dances with rapture my heart?  
 Why heaves in my bosom the amorous sigh,  
 As tho' it were loth to depart?  
 Why shines the bright orbit of day,  
 With beam so resplendently bright?  
 Why sheds forth its lustre, its heavenly ray,  
 With such brilliant such dazzling light?  
 Yet why do I ask it; I'll ask it no more—  
 'Tis the day that gave birth to the girl I adore.

What feeling is this in my breast,  
 A feeling of pleasure and pain,—  
 Which, tho' often wished for, is quickly repressed;—  
 Repress'd, is quick wished for again.  
 And why seems all nature so gay,  
 So happy, so lively, so free?  
 And why do the hours, as they swift pass away,  
 Give rapturous pleasure to me?  
 And my thoughts to the regions of happiness soar,  
 'Tis the day that gave birth to the girl I adore.

Yes, dear to my soul is that day  
 I have looked to with fondest delight,—  
 When hope has shed round its enrapturing ray,  
 And its visions have dazzled my sight;  
 But dearer than all is the maid  
 Whose bright and all-conquering glance,  
 With every charm, by pure virtue arrayed,  
 Could the soul of the stoic entrance.  
 Yes, 'tis come, and all anguish and sorrow is o'er,  
 'Tis the day that gave birth to the maid I adore.

Oh! oft may that lov'd day return,  
 And happier still may it be,  
 And the flame in her bosom continue to burn  
 With purest affection for me.  
 Oh! grant it, ye heavenly power,  
 That she may, to sorrow unknown,  
 In pleasure and happiness pass every hour,  
 And mine be misfortune alone.  
 Contented I'd bear it, if sorrow no more  
 Shall rend the soft bosom of her I adore.

## LOVE IN ST. GILES'S.

IN TWO PARTS.

## PART THE SECOND.

HER mind, in sooth it was a noble one;  
 How it became so it is hard to say;  
 The things around her she was wont to shun,  
 And no example led her in right's way;—  
 Yet she was lov'd by all, and hated none,—  
 Ne'er had a debt she knew not how to pay,—  
 Was very frugal, yet would freely lend  
 A pound or two to any needy friend.

Ianthe at her needle was quite clever,  
 Could make as neat a waistcoat as a tailor  
 Of Bond or Conduit Street; and, truly, never  
 Was industry or spirit known to fail her;—  
 In short, it was Ianthe's best endeavour,  
 Since life's unceasing crosses might assail her,  
 Before a husband or old age should come,  
 To save a tolerably decent sum.

But work was not her only occupation,—  
 Ianthe lov'd a little bit of reading,  
 And, for a damsel in her humble station,  
 Shew'd taste that would have grac'd a better breeding.

She read, but not from any inclination,  
 John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress; and, exceeding  
 All other books, she read aloud to Tabby,  
 The novel called, 'The Children of the Abbey.'

This Tabby was a cat of much sagacity,  
 Sole favourite of his mistress, who declared,  
 (And no one, sure, will question her veracity,)  
 That even as herself her Tabby far'd;  
 That most surprizing, too, was his capacity  
 To seize the rats and mice when they appear'd,—  
 And, in two words, Ianthe vow'd that never  
 Was there a cat so very very clever.

It chanc'd one morn, in cold and wintry weather,  
 Ianthe had walked out: in every street  
 Lay sleet and snow and ice, and, altogether,  
 It was a trying morning for one's feet;  
 Ianthe's shoes perchance were made of leather,  
 And that and ice agree not when they meet;  
 And so she had a very aukward slip,  
 And in the fall she rather hurt her hip.

Whom did that piercing shriek the most appal  
 Of those that idly round Ianthe stop?  
 Who mark'd with watchful eye that sudden fall,  
 And sprang across the street to raise her up?  
 Who listen'd to the lady's fainter call  
 For help, and fetch'd the life-restoring cup?  
 The muse shall give the kindly deed to fame—  
 Most active youth!—James Warren was his name.

'Twas not the first time he had walk'd behind her,  
 And her neat ancle and fine shape admir'd;  
 He ne'er had spoke before, but thus to find her,  
 Beleaguer'd, hurt, and very much bemired,  
 Unchain'd his tongue, and ere he had consign'd her  
 To her not distant home, his words had fir'd  
 The train of thoughts that lay about his heart,  
 Creating feelings never to depart.

'Oh! love, thou art a very mighty thing!  
 Oft have I read of what thy power can do,  
 But ne'er, till thus o'er shadow'd by thy wing,  
 Have felt and own'd the tale was ever true.  
 Deep one! thou hast me in a pretty string:—  
 Shall I prove coward?—Blow me, if I do!  
 His new-found treasure most sincerely prizing,  
 We'll leave the lover thus soliloquizing.

James was a pretty well conditioned youth;  
 Though not so frugal as our heroine,—  
 His open brow, and heart of simple truth,  
 Made her excuse this very heinous sin;  
 She taught him better soon; and, in good sooth—  
 She knew by gentle wiles the youth to win  
 From idle habits which he had contracted,  
 Where songs are sung, and private plays are acted.  
 We'll not go o'er their courtship,—'tis enough,  
 When they were tir'd of wooing, they were wed;  
 Laid in a quantity of household stuff—  
 Purchased a carpet and a feather bed;—  
 Liv'd very happily, though times were rough,—  
 Had girls and boys who were well clothed and fed;  
 Both were alive last year, and I'll engage  
 Are living still, though at a good old age. J. W. D.

## Fine Arts.

## THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS BY MR. WILKIN.

WE have a very high respect for those artists who, struggling against the tide of individual emolument, aim at the highest branch of the fine arts. The employment of

the portrait-painter may be the most lucrative, but it is the historical painter whose name is dear to posterity, from his bequeathing to it acceptable legacies and munificent donations. It is the portrait-painter who can easily turn his talents to immediate profit, but it is the historical painter who is a candidate for the wreath of fame, and who devotes his talents to the noblest purposes. Many complaints have been made upon this subject, and the British nation has been accused of neglecting historical painting, but the reason is easily assignable and is founded upon those common motives of self-interest and personal gratification which govern the world at large. If an artist, after labouring for many years at the study of his profession, and after gaining an accurate knowledge of anatomy and the antique, finds the historical ground already occupied, or if he meets with but little encouragement in that branch of his pursuits, (it matters not whether the public indifference arises from poverty of purse or poverty of taste,) it is natural enough that the artist should, a little after the way of the world, pursue portrait-painting, which, although, comparatively speaking, an inferior branch of the fine arts, is a ready means of at least satisfying his urgent pecuniary wants. But we nevertheless cannot refrain from applauding those painters who, with an admirable enthusiasm, which does them honour, sacrifice personal gratification to public benefit, and the giddy admiration of the ignorant and unpolished, to the approbation of the wise and learned, and to the valuable acquisitions of excellence and lasting good fame.

Every thing relating to our ancestors has an endearing interest, which highly prepossesses us in favour of historical works of the present description; we feel a glow of emulation and pride in contemplating the heroic deeds of our forefathers, in defence of those liberties which they wished to preserve inviolate from the rude grasp of the invader, however unsuccessfully they may have terminated; and we acknowledge with gratitude our obligation to those men of talent, who forcibly illustrate such feats of glory and valour, either with their pen or their pencil.

Having a high regard for the research of history, we respect those painters who, in their ardour for historical truth, leave no exertion untried to obtain information upon all points connected with their subject, and who have too much good sense to introduce into their painting a hauberk, a banner, or a helmet, for the form of which they have not a good authority, if such can possibly be procured. In this respect, Mr. Wilkin is entitled to our highest commendation. He has spared neither pains nor expense to procure the attainment of his very laudable object of producing a picture which might be established as a good authority for the ancient Norman and Saxon costumes. He has resorted to the most unquestionable authorities, and has not been a willing convert to the tales of idle tradition. He has carefully examined the Harleian, Cottonian, and other collections of manuscripts and antique drawings, together with the Bayeux tapestry, ancient monuments, coins, &c. and the great seal of William the Conqueror, which is, as we presume, still extant.

This large picture, describing one of the most eventful periods of British history, is painted for Sir Godfrey Webster, M. P., by the same artist whose copies of Rubens, notwithstanding their gaudiness, are in high repute. Its dimensions are thirty-one feet six inches by seventeen feet six inches. It is executed under a special commission to the artist, from Sir Godfrey Webster, in whose

great hall at Battel Abbey it is to be placed. The picture, perhaps, could not be deposited in a more appropriate place. The munificent commission of Sir Godfrey Webster does great credit to his liberal encouragement of the fine arts.

The battle of Hastings was fought October 14th, 1066, at a place on the coast of Hastings, called afterwards in commemoration of the engagement, 'Battel,' which name it still retains, where Battel Abbey, the seat of Sir Godfrey Webster, now stands.

The figure of William the Conqueror, mounted on horseback, is very properly the most imposing object, and is placed in the centre of this picture. He is represented in the act of curbing his horse, whilst heading a determined charge, which he made soon after the death of Harold. The dead body of the vanquished king is brought to William, as the most signal trophy of his victory. William appears confounded with joy at his success, and astonished with amazement at the bright consummation of his ambitious hopes, since the contest becomes no longer doubtful. Harold lies dead at the feet of his adversary, to whom, by the ancient law of victory, belongs the crown of this realm. He wears round his body a rusted hauberk, copied from his great seal, which has a splendid effect. On his head he wears a rich conical helmet, set with jewels, which was in use amongst the Danes. From his neck is suspended a locket, in which are deposited the relics of consecration, by which the conqueror caused Harold, when a prisoner in Normandy, to swear assistance to him in his object of obtaining the English crown. An onyx ring is placed on his finger, containing one of the hairs of Saint Peter, presented to William by Pope Alexander the Second, as a pledge of his amity and protection. His arms and thighs are bare; his boots are square at the toes, as, we believe, all the war-boots formerly were. His horse is a spirited Arabian, and its colour is favourably adapted to the picture. We think that the right arm of William is somewhat too turgid, since struck with the greatest amazement and joy, he perhaps unconsciously lets fall his sword—a suspension of action being a concomitant of extreme wonder. As there is no action or exertion at this time in the arm, nor in its nerves, except so much as is sufficient to retain the arm in its present position, the nerves should have been comparatively relaxed, and by no means so turgid as if William still grasped his sword, prepared to strike the decisive blow of conquest. Mr. Wilkin has drawn his portraits under the opinion that, in consequence of the barbarous state of the arts in the eleventh century, amongst the Anglo-Saxons and Normans, there is not a single portrait extant which might be properly applied to this picture. We do not perfectly agree with Mr. Wilkin on this point: although we allow that a gross Gothic character pervades the portraits and works of art of the Normans, yet we cannot suppose them to be entirely destitute of that identity which is desirable for a work like this picture. Thus, we may properly attribute a profile, when taken even in the most deplorable state of the arts, a certain degree of comparative identity with the original from which it was designed. It cannot well be so perfectly destitute of the peculiarity of individual feature, as to deserve total disregard as an authority for the outline of the object which it is intended to represent; and the same argument will hold with regard to a full delineation as to a mere outline, and, however want of skill may impoverish and detract from the force of any

subject in its delineation, we have no reason to conclude such inferior skill to be vitiated to so great an extent as to be utterly incapable of the description of its object. But Mr. Wilkin has adhered to no more than the general supposed character of the English and Norman nations and the ages of the several persons whose portraits he has given. We are of opinion, that the artist might have found some better authority for the portrait of William the First than that of his own imagination. The conqueror's horse is very spirited and beautiful, but the eyes, together with those of some of the other horses, are too human-like for quadrupedal existence. Horses at times display great fire in their eyes, but such fire never bespeaks the penetration of human intellect, which is here rather observable. The rich emblems of war on the ground in front of William are properly introduced, to lessen the glare of William's figure. The singular Norman custom of shaving the head is shown in the extraordinary instance of the handsome warrior-youth, who presents the royal English helmet to William. On the conqueror's left hand is his half-brother, Odo, the Bishop of Bayeaux, who points to the *Cyning's helm*, or royal helmet, presented by the young warrior, kneeling, to the conqueror, his chief. Odo appears anxiously observing the countenance of William, upon the presentation of that illustrious trophy of victory. The expression of Odo's countenance is well studied, and is replete with physiognomical conception, although it may be rather too severe, and not joyous enough. The martial and ambitious prelate, who in person rallied the troops at several periods of the hazardous combat, and led many effective charges, is properly introduced near his brother, at the consummation of the victorious contest. The chief, holding a Norman spear, with the red-cross banner, is well expressed. At the left of the picture are two Normans, holding up the corpse of Harold to the view of William. The Norman warrior supporting the left side of Harold, in exultation displays to his chief the deadly shaft which pierced the brain of Harold through the eye, and thereby caused his death. The face of this warrior has strength of execution, but his arm, which is raised, although fore-shortened, is, as we think, tame and too short, particularly near the shoulder. The grave countenance of the Norman common soldier, who supports the other side of the vanquished king, shows that even victors can weep over fallen greatness, and that enmity and humanity are not incongruous. The face and hands of Harold are well drawn, and are not injured by that very yellow tint improperly bestowed upon some of the other corpses. His armour, although made of leather, according to the Saxon costume of that time, wants throwing out, to enrich its effect, and render the figure somewhat more imposing. The navel part of the armour is particularly cold in the execution. At the left side of Odo is Tostain, surnamed the Fair, on account of the fairness of his complexion, to whose care and trust was committed the consecrated banner, or cross, presented to William by Pope Alexander. The significant look and action of Tostain evince his exultation at the victory of his chief, which he appears entirely to ascribe to the papal emblem of which he is the bearer. His left arm appears not very correctly drawn, but rather disjointed. We think that his complexion is not sufficiently fair to warrant the singular appellation which was applied to him. An interesting group of Norman soldiers behind is formed of attentive spectators of the impressive scene of William and the dead

body of Harold. A troop of Normans, which William was leading to the charge, is behind him, commanded by the Count Eustace, about to attack a remnant of the Saxon army, who, desperately furious at the loss of their monarch, desire again to turn upon their enemy. The countenance of the count, although vigorous, might have been more forcibly depicted, for the purpose of exhibiting those lively feelings of joy, which the victory of his chief must necessarily have inspired in his mind. He wears a tunic of trellis armour which was in use amongst the Saracens at the time. The figure of the Norman trumpeter, stationed upon an eminence, at the extreme right of the scene, blowing the ancient *slughorne*, or trumpet of victory, thereby warning the Norman commanders to gather around the victorious chief in the moment of victory, is very interesting and appropriate. In the foreground of the picture is an aged Saxon chief suffering under wounds; his countenance is expressive of mental despair and corporal pain, conscious of his own near approach to death, and of the decease of his much-loved monarch, in whose cause he has fought, and for whom he feels that he is about to die. What is more calculated to make desperate the division which he commanded, than the state of their leader at the point of death? We presume, that it is in this view, he is here aptly introduced. Behind him is a common Saxon resting upon his battle-axe, sensible of the defeat and ruin of his countrymen. The figure of a corpse on his back, (a Saxon we presume) behind the Saxon chief, is, as we think, the worst figure in the scene, badly drawn and badly coloured; really his face appears caricatured, and his accoutrements are scarcely better. Near to him lies slain the brave Tallefee the Norman, who, at the first attack, was in the very van of his warlike friends, and whilst singing the battle-song of Roland and Charlemagne, killed three Anglo-Saxons before the juncture of the two contending armies. To the very left in the foreground, are several Saxons and Normans who have been slaughtered in the battle. In the front of the group is *Gurth*, the brother of Harold, suffering under very severe wounds, which render him insensible to the passing scene. As a conclusive proof of the victory of the Normans, the Saxon standard appears on the ground, with its shaft broken, upon which a Norman is about to trample, whilst the Norman banner flies triumphant in the air on that very spot where Harold's had been stationed, and where he had fought his battle with determined bravery until he fell lifeless in the field. In the distance and centre-ground are represented the various sorts of attack and defence, which at that time prevailed. In the distance on the right, descending a hill, is a Norman troop of horsemen galloping to the immediate scene of action. In the remote distance also are several bodies of soldiers, of different ranks, arranged pursuant to the order of battle at that period. We believe that only one of the brothers of *Harold* is introduced, although history records that both were present in the field.

There are several banners with different emblems, such as the two lions, for the arms of the conqueror, the red cross, the yellow cross, the swan, the snake, the eagle, five balls, the star, &c. We presume that such are the banners of several different knights, since, in the times of chivalry and ancient war, each knight had his arms depicted as well upon his banner as upon his shield.

The arms and armour in general are correct and brilli-

liant, and the dresses are elegant and splendid. The Norman spears accurately resemble that which is placed in the Gothic Hall, Pall Mall, being the only one, as we understand, now extant.

Although the time, which the picture is intended to describe, is about sun-set, yet there appears too much attempt in the back-ground and distance at artificial atmospheric effect; it tends to produce the appearance of reality in the fore-ground, but yet it appears too artificial to please the eye; its tone might have been rendered more judiciously sober.

We observe in this picture, no weeping maid sighing over the corpse of her lover, mixed amongst the slain; we submit that such an object might have been introduced with effect, although as this is only a matter of imagination, the painter was perfectly at liberty to exclude it.

The story is well conceived, and is happily described in this picture, which establishes the fame of Mr. Wilkin as an historical painter of merit.

We are sensible of the many sleepless nights and laborious days which must have been devoted by the artist to the task at present under notice, and we envy not the feelings of those persons who are not disposed to make the most liberal allowances in an undertaking of this nature. We have detailed what we conceive might have been improved upon, not for the purpose of depreciating the talents of the artist;—by so doing, we should only depreciate ourselves. We admit that Mr. Wilkin has accomplished much, and that he is intitled to great credit for the manner in which he has in general executed this, his most important production, and whilst we give him our humble yet unbiassed advice, we offer him our sincere and warm encouragement.

\*. \*. T.

### Literary and Scientific Intelligence.

A Manuscript of undoubted authenticity has just reached this country, which is calculated to excite an extraordinary degree of interest. It is already in the hands of a translator, and will be published, both in English and in the original French, during the ensuing month. It is entitled, "*Documents Historiques et Reflexions sur le Gouvernement de la Hollande par Louis Bonaparte, Ex Roi de Hollande.*" This Work contains every event relating to the political or financial situation of Holland, from the commencement of the reign of Louis, until the close of his government; and sketches of the invasion of Italy, and expedition in Egypt, in both of which the author was present; relations of the most important events in Spain, and his refusal of the crown of that kingdom, on the renunciation of Charles IV. to Ferdinand his son, and the formal cession of the latter to Napoleon; copies of the letters of Charles and Ferdinand, relating to the conspiracy of the latter against his father; the hitherto secret motives of the marriage of the author with the daughter of the Empress Josephine, and their subsequent mutual agreement to a separation; the events which occurred on the separation of the Emperor Napoleon and the Empress Josephine; the various princesses proposed to Napoleon, and the reason of his selecting the daughter of the Emperor of Austria; numerous characteristic and highly interesting letters from Napoleon to the author, exposing his views, situation, and purposes; an indisputable genealogical history of the family of Bonaparte, extracted from various Histories of Italy, and other public documents; all of which prove beyond doubt the illustrious rank they held in Italy, even in the 12th Century; and it is somewhat singular, that 600 years ago, Androlus Bonaparte was Grand Podesta, or Governor of Parma, where is now the wife of Napoleon, as Grand Duchess! An important letter

from the Duc de Cadove, explaining the intentions of the Emperor relating to Holland, the various united propositions of France and Russia to accommodate with England, and a variety of anecdotes by the author, of Napoleon, and of his Family.

### The Bee.

*Floriferis ut apes in saltibus omnia limant,  
Omnia nos itidem depascimur aurea dicta!*

LUCRETIVS.

*St. Valentine.*—Valentine was an ancient presbyter of the church: after a year's imprisonment at Rome he was beaten with clubs, and then beheaded, in the *Via Flaminia*, about the year 270, under Claudius II. The modern celebration of this day, with young persons, is well known.

*Shrove Tuesday.*—This is called 'Fastern's E'en and Pancake Tuesday. *Shrove* is the preterite of *shrive*, an antiquated word, which signifies to hear or make confession. The Popish Carnival commences on Twelfth-day, and usually holds till Lent. At Rome, the Carnival lasts for nine days, and it is no where seen in such perfection as at this place.

*Ash Wednesday.*—Formerly Lent began on the Sunday after *Quinquagesima*, i. e. our first Sunday in Lent, and ended at Easter, containing in all 42 days; and subtracting the six Sundays which are not fasts, there remained only 36 fasting days, the tenth part of 360, the number of days in the ancient year, then considered as a tythe of the year consecrated to God's service. To these 36 fasting days, however, of the *Old-Lent*, Gregory added four days more, to render it equal to the time of our Saviour's fasting, causing it to begin on *Ash Wednesday*, three days after *Quinquagesima*; and thus it has remained ever since. Lent is not of apostolic institution, nor was it known in the earlier ages of the Christian church.

### TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

The advice of 'a Friend,' recommending a stamped edition, to facilitate the country circulation of THE LITERARY CHRONICLE, is outweighed by the consideration that the price would in such case be raised to one shilling, double its present price, and would impose a tax upon readers who now receive the paper weekly in many parts of the country, while the plan of monthly numbers, from the nature of our work, must be far more agreeable to the public in general.

Errata: p. 75, col. 2, l. 11, for 'many' read 'many more;' p. 76, col. 1. l. 14 from bottom, for 'punished' read 'punishable.'

In a part of our last number, some of the paging was misprinted, and we beg to suggest the propriety of altering it with a pen, to prevent perplexity in references from the Index.

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